WORLD CHRONICLE

UNITED NATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DURATION: 27' 47" TRANSCRIPT AS BROADCAST

PROGRAMME: "WORLD CHRONICLE"

GUEST: Francois Giuliani, Spokesman for the U.N. Secretary-General

MODERATOR: Michael Littlejohns

SYNOPSIS

SPOKESMAN FOR THE U.N. SECRETARY-GENERAL

A 15-minute film wrap-up of the year is provided as Francois Giuliani, Spokesman for the United Nations Secretary-General, comments on what 1990 has meant in restoring the international organization to new vigor.

"WORLD CHRONICLE" is produced by the Information Products Division, Department of Public Information, United Nations, New York, N.Y. 10017, USA.

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Programme No. 415 Recorded on 12 December 1990

VOICE From United Nations Headquarters in New York, this is **WORLD CHRONICLE**, an unedited interview programme about major global issues. Here now to introduce our guest is the host of today's **WORLD CHRONICLE**.

LITTLEJOHNS: I'm Michael Littlejohns and this is **WORLD CHRONICLE**.

Most news shows like ours have a habit of taking stock at the end of the year. The big networks generally poll their correspondents at home and abroad attempting to make sense of what it all meant. While we're a bit more specialized and have fewer resources, we're not about to concede anything to those other news programmes. So we're going to depart from our usual format as we occasionally do to show you a 15-minute wrap-up of the year prepared by the Department of Public Information.

Afterwards, we'll be speaking with the U.N. Secretary-General's Spokesman, Francois Giuliani, part of whose job it is to see that we in the Press Corps get our facts straight. Here at Headquarters and in his travels with Mr. Perez de Cuéllar, Mr. Giuliani has often seen in firsthand detail much of what we're about to show you. And so, without further ado, here's what 1990 looked like from a U.N. perspective.

WHITEHOUSE: 1990. Images of a remarkable year. A tide of historic change in Europe and a triumph for human rights. In Southern Africa, the end of decades of conflict and the potential for a new beginning. Some of the highlights of a year that saw improving relations between the superpowers and an emerging international consensus.

And with these developments the outlines of what some saw as a new world order and new possibilities for the United Nations.

Some Heads of State visiting U.N. Headquarters in New York during 1990 saw these events as heralding a rebirth of the World Organization.

U.S. President George Bush:

BUSH: "And we've shown that the U.N. can count on the collective strength of the international community. We've shown that the U.N. can rise to the challenge of aggression, just as its founders hoped that it would."

WHITEHOUSE: For the Security Council, the main challenge in 1990 was to find a peaceful solution to the Kuwait crisis. It passed a series of resolutions including the unanimous imposition of sanctions against Iraq. As the crisis unfolded, U.N. Secretary-General, Javier Perez de Cuéllar, flew to Amman to meet with Iraqi representatives. It was part of the worldwide effort to find a negotiated solution to the crisis.

PEREZ DE CUELLAR: "As I leave Amman I must acknowledge a certain disappointment, because I had hoped for more in my discussions with Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz."

WHITEHOUSE: The Kuwait crisis would continue to put the U.N. on the front pages throughout the rest of the year. But diplomatic efforts also made headlines in other parts of the world.

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There was the U.N.'s role as catalyst in Namibia and Nicaragua, where peaceful political transitions were achieved with the help of internationally supervised elections. Independence celebrations in Namibia in March, marked the successful end to years of diplomatic efforts to make South Africa adopt a U.N. plan for the transition of the territory from Africa's last colony to sovereign state.

The Secretary-General swore in the country's first president, Sam Nujoma, and declared that the U.N. role here was far from over.

PEREZ DE CUELLAR: "I wish to pledge the full support of the United Nations to Namibia in the challenging task of nation-building."

WHITEHOUSE: An historic day in Namibia: And soon after, the new nation's flag went up outside U.N. Headquarters as Member State number 160. A fitting highlight in a year that marked the 30th anniversary of the U.N. Declaration on Decolonization.

Membership of the U.N. went up and down during 1990. Unification of North and South Yemen reduced the number of Member States to 159 in June. A few weeks later Lichtenstein joined as the 160th member. Then with German unification the number represented in the General Assembly dipped to 159 again. Since seating here is alphabetical, all these changes led to occasional confusion as delegates searched for their new seats.

There were new jobs for the blue helmets in 1990 as the U.N. expanded its peacekeeping operations to the Western hemisphere for the first time. The U.N. force in Central America played a key role in helping to supervise the regional ceasefire. Peacekeepers destroyed the weapons of Nicaraguan resistance fighters -- and gave them clothes and food to start civilian life.

In a parallel operation, the U.N. helped to monitor the Nicaraguan elections; the first time it has carried out this role in an independent country. One responsibility for the team of 240 U.N. observers in Nicaragua was to ensure that all political parties received equal access to Government radio and television during the campaign.

On election day, U.N. and other official observer teams were in place at voting points across the country. As it became clear that the opposition was headed for victory, the losing Sandinistas announced that they would abide by the result. The newly elected president of Nicaragua, Violetta Barrios de Chamorro, expressed her nation's gratitude in the General Assembly, thanking the world forum on behalf of every Nicaraguan.

Camps like this have been home for years to tens of thousands of Nicaraguan refugees. For Susanna Chavez and her family, the coming of a political settlement meant going home at last. It was a moment of joy:

CHAVEZ: "I feel so happy. My heart is overflowing."

WHITEHOUSE: With the anticipated operations in Cambodia and Western Sahara still in preparation, the U.N. at year's end was assisting in another election, this time in Haiti. Explaining the U.N.'s role was one of the first tasks. A TV campaign had one Haitian explain to another, that the U.N. has a lot of experience in monitoring elections.

But if peace means hope and the prospect of a return home for refugees, uncertainty all too often leads to human suffering. With the crisis in the Gulf, the U.N. moved to help more than half a million evacuees fleeing the area.

In October, the Security Council turned to another Middle East issue. It unanimously adopted a resolution criticizing Israel for its handling of demonstrators in Jerusalem, leading to the death of 21 Palestinians. Dramatic video of the incident was played to the Security Council.

For 25 million Black South Africans living as second class citizens in their own country, 1990 was a year when a little light could be seen at the end of the tunnel. Talks between the African National Congress and the South AFrican Government began. The ban on anti-apartheid organizations was lifted and a number of political prisoners were released. Among them was Nelson Mandela, after 27 years in prison. He received a hero's welcome in New York.

SPECTATOR IN CROWD: ".... we have a black man and this is good for the young people to see that a black man can be the symbol for the whole world."

WHITEHOUSE: He spoke in the General Assembly about the U.N.'s stand against racism, most recently expressed in its declaration on the destructive consequences of apartheid.

MANDELA: "That declaration will go down in history as one of the most important documents in the struggle of the international community against apartheid."

WHITEHOUSE: Another striking example of global commitment to a cause was the World Summit for Children. 71 national leaders met at U.N. Headquarters to pledge their government's determination to protect and educate their most vulnerable citizens. Czechoslovak President, Vaclav Havel, said that parents should be prohibited from serving dictators. Parents should not inform on others or bend their backs ...

HAVEL: " .... be scared of dictators and betray one's friends and ideals in the name and for the alleged interest of children. And that is forbidden for all murderers and dictators to pat children on their heads."

WHITEHOUSE: President Joseph Momoh of Sierra Leone:

MOMOH: "Our attention has been drawn to the startling and awesome statistics that for every passing year 14 million children die all over the world."

WHITEHOUSE: President Momoh and other leaders stressed the fact that 40,000 children die every day from diseases that are easily preventable.

1990's grim reality was that many nations, confronted by debt, simply did not have the resources to tackle their problems, a situation made worse by unforeseen events such as soaring oil prices. Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen:

QICHEN: "Developing countries whose economies were already in great difficulties, have found themselves in deeper water as they are forced to bear the brunt."

WHITEHOUSE: A report by the U.N. Development Programme reminded us that nearly one billion adults in the developing world are illiterate. An even greater number receive no primary health care and have no access to a safe source of water. Doing something about these facts continued to be the main job of the U.N. system during the year.

42 nations in the world with 400 million people are classified in a category known as least developed countries, the poorest of the poor. A conference on their plight looked at ways for these countries to diversity their economies. In Bangladesh, for example, an innovative co-operative banking system is helping small businesses.

Even a simple device, such as an improved cornmill, introduced in Guatemala by UNICEF, saves hours a day freeing the time for women to study and become more productive members of their community. And a special session of the General Assembly in April agreed on guidelines for worldwide co-operation and debt relief to revitalize the economies of developing nations. A theme reiterated by Soviet Foreign Minister, Eduard Shevardnadze.

SHEVARDNADZE: "Everybody would gain if each group of countries were to adjust its approaches and show willingness to forsake individual or group self-interest in economic co-operation setting as its highest priority the interest of the common good."

WHITEHOUSE: The common good. As we enter the last decade of the century, a major issue is how to strike the balance between development and the protection of the environment we all share. International action in 1990 included the signing of an international convention for emergency response to oil spills.

Progress in the world fight against the narcotics trade included ratification of the Convention Against Illicit Drug Trafficking. U.S. Attorney-General Richard Thornburg:

THORNBURG: "The United States views this as the single most important treaty in the area of drug law enforcement ever undertaken."

WHITEHOUSE: Actions were taken on the broader questions of crime and justice at the U.N. Crime Congress in Havana, Cuba. At a time when heavier responsibilities are being placed on the United Nations, the Organization faces serious financial problems.

Despite increasing use of the U.N. by governments as the main tool to maintain world peace and security, some states are still behind in paying their membership dues.

As the year drew to an end, the Security Council took a further step towards strengthening its stand against Iraq. At a meeting attended by 13 Foreign Ministers, it set a January 15 deadline for Baghdad to withdraw its forces from Kuwait. The Council authorized "all necessary means" to achieve this end. British Foreign Minister, Douglas Hurd, explained his country's vote.

HURD: "Mr. President, we are gathered here today, it seems to me, to make a strong bid for peace. That is the purpose of this meeting. No state represented on the Council has any zest for war."

WHITEHOUSE: French Foreign Minister, Roland Dumas:

DUMAS: "We prefer a solution by peaceful means, a peaceful settlement and not confrontation. But they must entertain, no doubt, as to our resolve. Although my country is deeply committed to the search for a political settlement, in the final analysis, law must prevail."

WHITEHOUSE: Secretary-General, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, spoke to the press after the vote.

PEREZ DE CUELLAR: "I think it would be wise now to give some time for reflection to the Iraqi government, and then perhaps after a few days I will see whether there is room for the United Nations to embark in some peaceful efforts."

WHITEHOUSE: 1990, in what is being called the first year of the post-cold-war era, a missile entered the U.N. compound. It is a symbol not of war, but of peace; part of a statue donated to the Organization by the Soviet nation

as a token of the end of the superpower arms race. It represents the hope that resources once devoted to war can be released for the challenge of peace, justice and development.

LITTLEJOHNS: The programme is **WORLD CHRONICLE** but today we've departed from our usual format during the first half of the show by airing a year-end summary of the events of 1990 as seen from a U.N. perspective. Watching in the studio with me has been Francois Giuliani, Spokesman for the U.N. Secretary-General.

Francois, welcome to **WORLD CHRONICLE.**

LITTLEJOHNS: Francois, you and I were corespondents at the U.N. for Reuters News Service before you became the Secretary-General's Spokesman and I'm sure you'll remember that those were very often lean times newswise. That certainly can't be said for this past year, how well equipped would you say is the United Nations to deal with these awesome responsibilities that are now being thrust upon it?

GIULIANI: I think it is very well equipped. I mean it has proved during the year 1990 that it could do this task if only it was entrusted with them. It has delivered I think a superb performance.

LITTLEJOHNS: Previously, of course, the United Nations was said to have been inhibited and unable to perform the duties envisaged in the Charter by the founding fathers because of the cold war, that is the case I believe, right?

GIULIANI: Clearly so, yes, of course. The Security Council could not function.

LITTLEJOHNS: And now it seems that with the Security Council functioning almost weekly or meeting almost weekly, sometimes several times a week, perhaps a little too much has been given to the U.N. to handle would you think?

GIULIANI: Well, you know this is up to the membership. Obviously, many states have rediscovered the U.N. so that it's sort of fashionable to come to the U.N. and people expect a lot of it. I think eventually this will sort itself out and that the U.N. will be called upon to deal with those problems it can deal with rather than attempt too much. We don't want to monopolize solution of problems. I think we have a part to play but we're not going to be the world government in the next decade, for sure.

LITTLEJOHNS: A series of United States administrations ignored the United Nations to a great extent and in some cases even reviled it. Under President Bush, who was of course the United States representative to the U.N. several years ago, that situation has changed markedly and the United States now seems to be using the United Nations to a great extent as one might almost say an arm of American foreign policy. Isn't there a bit of a danger there, after all the United States is only one Member State among 159? Isn't there a fear that the Soviet Union also is using the U.N. to a very great degree, that these two superpowers and a few more prominent members might tend to dominate the Organization?

GIULIANI: Let me say first of all that we all welcome very much the fact that the U.S. administration and particularly President Bush personally have come back -- can't say rediscovered because President Bush was Ambassador here as you said and knew what the U.N. could do -- but I think that the fact that the United States has given such strong support to the

U.N. in 1990 is a very important, new element in the international situation. This being said, of course there are some countries that fear and resent always the domination of the U.N. by one country or the other but I think one shouldn't be too nervous and too apocalyptic about it. The United States at the moment is using the United Nations in a very specific issue which is the Gulf issue, but once things go back to some sort of normality I think we should be able to continue the good work without any fear or suspicions.

LITTLEJOHNS: Has the role of the Third World been diminished would you say by these developments? The end of the cold war? After all with the cold war no longer existing one can hardly talk about alignment and non-alignment anymore.

GIULIANI: No, one can't speak of alignment or non-alignment but one can speak about wealth and poverty and I think that's a great danger and I think the U.N. will have to be very, very careful about this that it doesn't turn its back on the issues of the poorer countries which are that poverty in the southern part of the world is really the reason for the instability that we see constantly and I think that the Western countries, the industrialized countries, cannot hope for stability in the new world order that we've heard talked about so much until their problems begin to receive a solution. And I think that we will have to be very attentive to this in the next few years.

LITTLEJOHNS: But the U.N. can't do very much about that?

GIULIANI: Well, the U.N. can sensitize the conscience of public opinion which is behind the governments after all.

LITTLEJOHNS: Now you are the Spokesman for the Secretary-General and he, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar, is entering the final year of his second five-year term and no Secretary-General has ever served more than two terms, so if one assumes that he is not going to break the mould, what would you consider are his principal priorities for this final year?

GIULIANI: As you've said, he's not a candidate so at the end of 1991 he's ready to leave.

LITTLEJOHNS: This gives him greater freedom to do lots of things.

GIULIANI: It gives him greater freedom, also a year goes very quickly as we see and there's a sense of urgency. I think that there are some pending operations which are coming towards the U.N., such as Cambodia and Western Sahara, where the U.N. will play a very important part but I think probably he would like to launch these operations during 1991.

LITTLEJOHNS: You mentioned the case of Cambodia. There have been estimates of a U.N. bill of as much as $1.5 billion, perhaps even more, for an enormous operation in Cambodia to restore that country to some element of tranquility, where on earth is this money coming from?

GIULIANI: The Member States have got to pay, no doubt about it. Do they want peace, do they want stability, do they want a very dangerous region of the globe to be stabilized through the U.N. presence? Is that cheaper than war? Well, of course it is cheaper than war to give the money to the U.N. to do this task and I think that they will think about it and reluctantly agree it is so and I'm confident that we'll get the means to do the job.

LITTLEJOHNS: You mentioned Western Sahara, what's the situation there?

GIULIANI: Again, I think that it's reasonable to expect a U.N. operation to lead that territory to a referendum sometime during 1991. It will not be as big an operation as Cambodia of course, not even as Namibia, but Western Sahara is a dangerous region of the world because it's a North African conflict which could lead to war between the North African countries, so it's a very important issue.

LITTLEJOHNS: Coming back to the Gulf crisis, the Secretary-General since he went to Amman, Jordan for talks with Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Foreign Minister, very early in the crisis has not been very prominent and it seems that other people -- Secretary of State Baker, some other personalities, the representative of President Gorbachev -- have been involved in the negotiations, do you foresee a more active role for the Secretary-General in 1991 in the Gulf crisis?

GIULIANI: Well, you know he has wished everybody well and if they can come back with a peaceful and just solution of that crisis acceptable by all, well then so much the better. We're not in competition with anybody else but experience has shown that usually there's a period of diplomatic activity, rather feverish and disorderly, which is then followed up by a period where the U.N. has a role to play trying to find some common ground and this has happened many times. Remember the Iran/Iraq war where for a long time there were all sorts of attempts on every side to find a solution and everybody eventually turned to the Secretary-General and that led to a ceasefire. So I think that the Secretary-General is waiting to see if he has a role to play and keeping himself in reserve.

LITTLEJOHNS: Some people had the feeling that perhaps the Secretary-General is not too keen on this resolution in the Security Council that what was interpreted as authorizing the use of force if Saddam Hussein did not withdraw his forces by January the 15th. The Secretary-General perhaps felt that greater effort should be made at peaceful negotiations?

GIULIANI: You know the Secretary-General never criticizes the actions of the Security Council as long as they are taken under the U.N. Charter. This was, so there is no criticism but obviously as the Secretary-General of a peace organization he has to favour peace. I mean there is no peace with justice of course not any kind of peace, not appeasement. He has always said that peace yes, appeasement no. But certainly when one contemplates the possibility of war and the horrors of war we have to hope for peace.

LITTLEJOHNS: Well, some people have of course said that the Secretary-General was not as outspoken as he might have been in criticizing the Iraqi action against Kuwait?

GIULIANI: I don't think that's correct. The Secretary-General was extremely clear in his condemnation of the invasion and annexation of Kuwait and there is no doubt at all about his position on this.

LITTLEJOHNS: Mr. Giuliani, that's all the time we have. Thank your for joining us on this special 1990 wrap-up edition of **WORLD CHRONICLE**. It's certainly been a very eventful and important year for the United Nations and the world.

Our guest has been Francois Giuliani, Spokesman for the U.N. Secretary-General.

I'm Michael Littlejohns. Thank you for joining us. We invite you to be with us for the next edition of WORLD CHRONICLE.

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Transcripts of the programme may be obtained free of charge by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: WORLD CHRONICLE, United Nations, Room S-827, New York, New York 10017, USA.

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